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Mr. McCone to The President; Copy to the Killian Board

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I have reviewed the recommendations made by your Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board in connection with its examination of the Berlin Wall and Syrian Coup incidents and have studied them in the light of the Board's report. The members of the United States Intelligence Board have assisted me in this study.

Considered in their entirety, the recommendations are taken as an expression of a need for greater attention specifically to "crisis situations." In response to this requirement I propose to assign responsibility for assembling and appraising reports in this field -- in the non-communist areas of the world -- to the office now producing the Weekly Survey of Cold War Crisis Situations. That office already produces Special National Estimates on crisis situations and therefore has both experience in this field and direct communications with all members of the Intelligence Community. This action will permit the Watch Committee to concentrate on its important mission of providing warning of hostile action, or of impending developments that could eventuate in hostile action, by the Sino-Soviet bloc. I believe this arrangement, with a clear-cut division of responsibility, will improve our continuing assessment of crisis situations both within and outside the Sino-Soviet bloc.

I strongly believe that the sense of urgency in our intelligence agencies, both in the field and at headquarters, is at a high level and cannot profitably be raised, especially with respect to activities within

the Sino-Soviet bloc. What may be needed is more explicit guidance in the reporting and appraisal of crisis situations outside the bloc. This direction and emphasis will come from the presence and activities of the central group responsible for pulling together and appraising crisis situation reports.

Chiefs of Missions in foreign countries now submit periodic appraisals of conditions and developments in their areas of responsibility. In addition to these periodic appraisals, initiative reporting and reporting in fulfillment of requirements levied by headquarters of representatives on the Country Team maintain the current picture of the situation in any country. When a crisis situation develops or is foreseen, a Country Team appraisal of all available intelligence is normally made spontaneously or is called for, and is kept current by further initiative reporting. While these assessments have their limitations in that all intelligence available in the intelligence community is not normally available to the Country Team, they are important in providing the judgment of the men on the ground. The Department of State makes a periodic assessment of the reporting by each foreign post, pointing out the urgency of certain subjects and shortcomings in reporting. The assignment of expanded responsibilities to an agency charged with continuous monitoring and appraisal of crisis situations will provide a further means for evaluation of the adequacy of reporting.

I agree in principle that there should be opportunity for dissent by members of the United States Intelligence Board and its subordinate bodies in reporting their deliberations and conclusions to the policy makers. This opportunity should even be extended to members of missions in foreign countries in presenting Country Team appraisals. Although procedures now

exist for expression of minority views by members of the United States Intelligence Board and its subordinate bodies, the practice has not been encouraged and, in my opinion, for a very good reason. These agencies serve policy makers by presenting the best coordinated judgments of the intelligence community. If the practice of submitting disparate opinions is encouraged, the result will be that the policy maker will often have to arrive at his own decision without benefit of the detailed consideration of all the evidence available to the intelligence agencies.

Existing arrangements for reporting all forms of foreign intelligence to you and to members of your staff are, in my opinion, sufficiently comprehensive and flexible to insure adequate reporting of crisis situations. I intend, however, to discuss the working of these arrangements with members of your staff, both to assure myself of their satisfaction with current procedures and with a view to improving arrangements for obtaining, for use in the intelligence community, reports furnished to the White House by non-intelligence sources. I would like also to discuss arrangements for dissemination of operational information to United States Intelligence Board members, especially where impending operations may evoke reaction from foreign countries.